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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SHRIMP HEADS IN COLOR IS LATEST AID IN BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Shrimp with heads of pastel colors are not dreams nor are they passing fads or fancies. For the biologists of the Institute of Marine Science of the University of Texas, working on a Fish and Wildlife Service research project, have discovered a safe, sure, easy, way of identifying shrimp for study.

The biologists have found that certain dyes introduced into a shrimp's body by hypodermic needle or food will color the head of the shrimp but will not color the edible portions. Various colors can be used, with the hypodermic needle method of introducing dye into the shrimp providing the wider selection.

This solves a problem which has been hampering scientific studies of shrimp for decades. Because shrimp molt periodically as part of the process of growth, the usual methods of tagging have only been partially satisfactory. The dye persists in the heads for several months.

The identification work is part of a study of the movements and migrations of shrimp populations, which in turn is part of a comprehensive study of shrimp now being conducted by the Fish and Wildlife Service with funds supplied through the Saltonstall-Kennedy Act.

Another part of the research is being done by Tulane University where the first comprehensive anatomical study ever to be made of shrimp is being pursued. A third study is being made on the structure and chemistry of shrimp tissues at the Texas A. and M. Marine Laboratory while still another project to determine the effects of various environmental factors on shrimp is being made by the Fish and Wildlife Service biologists at Galveston, Texas.

Shrimp is America's largest fishery in terms of compensation paid for the product at the boat--more than \$70,000,000 a year--and most of America's production is in the Gulf of Mexico. The purpose of the study, together with an enlarged statistical program, is to enable biologists and members of the fishing industry to maintain a watchful eye on the shrimp fishery in the interests not only of the more than 7,000 trawler owners and crews and the processors who depend upon shrimping for a livelihood but for millions of Americans who consider shrimp one of the finer foods.

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